



Jerrod Kerr

OUR DECEMBER 2015 INSPIRATION



Tragedy
to triumph.
There is
always hope.

In June of 2014, former area resident, Jerrod Kerr, was involved in a serious automobile accident in Dilley, Texas. Ejected from his vehicle, his spine was severed, resulting in paralysis from the waist down.

From the start, doctors informed the family there was no hope. "There is always hope," remarked Jerrod's mother, Diane.

His determination, optimism and confidence are what have led him to defying the odds. This active 34 year old moved to Florida to have access to state-of-the-art rehabilitative services. He is a member of the *Miami Beach Rowing Club* where he is involved with the adaptive rowing team, continues to work out at the *iAm Able Fitness* to strengthen his upper body and core muscles and has even undertaken snorkeling.

In October of this year, he took his first steps using the only FDA approved wearable exoskeleton, called the ReWalk. Less than 100 people worldwide have used this device. A fitted brace with a computer based control system backpack simulates the gait of walking legs. Battery powered motors create joint movements; a wireless remote control is worn on the wrist which allows the user to command the suit's motions. It contains a tilt sensor that recognizes the body leaning forward, allowing it to take a step. Users can stand upright, walk, turn, climb and descend stairs "I would love to see this piece of equipment readily available to everyone that needs it. This past January, the first reimbursement for a personal exoskeleton system was paid for by a private insurer. Currently,

the cost is around \$75,000.00," said Jerrod. "It not only helps with mobility, it has benefits for reducing the risk of osteoporosis, improves bladder function and helps tremendously with circulation and cardiovascular health," continued Jerrod. "It was strange getting used to it, but it was exhilarating to be able to walk again."

"My family has been incredible. I lived with my brother, John, his wife, Ainsley and niece, Piper, for 18 months following the accident. They were terrific. I couldn't have done it without them and help from my Mom and Dad," commented Jerrod. "I recently met a goal I had set for myself and am currently living on my own," smiled Jerrod. "Being independent is very important to me. Taking classes through Landmark Worldwide has allowed me to make positive changes in the quality of my life. I have become more empowered and it has given me a sense of freedom to accomplish what I need to go on with my life," said Jerrod. "It has been a tremendous help mentally."

Jerrod is also working on some Public Service Announcements to heighten awareness about spinal cord injuries. They are expected to begin airing in January of 2016. His sincere commitment to helping others is to be applauded. He knows he is in for a long grueling road ahead, but he is absolutely certain he will continue to beat the odds while doing what he can to help others with spinal cord injuries.

We are proud to introduce our December Faces of Health Representative, Jerrod Kerr.

